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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/543,860	04/05/2000	Stephen Smith	200-0235	6394

33198 7590 09/11/2002

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EXAMINER

HAQ, NAEEM U

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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3625

DATE MAILED: 09/11/2002

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/543,860

Applicant(s)

SMITH, STEPHEN

Examiner

Naeem Haq

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 4/5/2000.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-51 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-51 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
- Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- 11) ☐ The proposed drawing correction filed on _____ is: a) ☐ approved b) ☐ disapproved by the Examiner.
- If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.
- 12) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

- 13) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 14) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).
- a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 15) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) _____
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). _____
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: _____

DETAILED ACTION

Response to Amendment

Preliminary amendment, paper number 4, received on August 20, 2001 has been entered.

Priority

Applicant has not complied with one or more conditions for receiving the benefit of an earlier filing date under 35 U.S.C. 119(e) or 120 as follows: This application is claiming benefit to a nonprovisional application (09/561,644) filed on May 2, 2000. Please note that the current application was filed on April 5, 2000. Therefore, at the time of filing, the current application lacked copendency with application 09/561,644.

Claim Objections

Referring to claims 1, 17, 31, and 45, the recitation "...online product ordering and tracking..." has not been given patentable weight because the recitation occurs in the preamble. A preamble is generally not accorded any patentable weight where it merely recites the purpose of a process or the intended use of a structure, and where the body of the claim does not depend on the preamble for completeness but, instead, the process steps or structural limitations are able to stand alone. See *In re Hirao*, 535 F.2d 67, 190 USPQ 15 (CCPA 1976) and *Kropa v. Robie*, 187 F.2d 150, 152, 88 USPQ 478, 481 (CCPA 1951).

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

Claims 1, 17, 31, 45, 48, and 50 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention. These claims recite the word "substantially". It is unclear to what extent a vehicle must match a search criterion in order to be "substantially matching".

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(e) the invention was described in a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention thereof by the applicant for patent, or on an international application by another who has fulfilled the requirements of paragraphs (1), (2), and (4) of section 371(c) of this title before the invention thereof by the applicant for patent.

The changes made to 35 U.S.C. 102(e) by the American Inventors Protection Act of 1999 (AIPA) do not apply to the examination of this application as the application being examined was not (1) filed on or after November 29, 2000, or (2) voluntarily published under 35 U.S.C. 122(b). Therefore, this application is examined under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) prior to the amendment by the AIPA (pre-AIPA 35 U.S.C. 102(e)).

Claims 1, 3, 9, 15, 17, 23, 29, 31, 37, 43, 45, and 49 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Wolfe et al (US Patent 6,282,517 B1).

Referring to claims 1, 17, 31, and 45, Wolfe teaches an online system, comprising:

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- a search request message including:
 - i) at least one search criteria (column 6, lines 31-33; column 10, lines 19-24);
 - ii) a weighting of each criterion (column 4, lines 57-65; column 8, lines 6-21);
- a search reply message including:
 - i) a list of vehicles substantially matching the at least one search criteria (Figure 15);
- a plurality of vehicle configuration parameters of the vehicles substantially matching the search criteria, including make, model, dealer identifier, price, and color (Figures 3, 4, and 15).

Referring to claim 3, Wolfe teaches that the search request message comprises: a request tag, a criteria tag, and a criterion tag providing a dealer identifier (column 4, lines 57-65; column 10, lines 15-29; column 11, lines 1-8).

Referring to claims 9, 23, and 37, Wolfe teaches the system of claims 1 and 17, further comprising: a tag request message including: order information associated with the tag request; contact information of the user; credit authorization information; tagged vehicle parameters (column 11, lines 9-33).

Referring to claims 15, 29, and 43, Wolfe teaches a tag status message generated in response to processing a tag request message (Figure 15).

Referring to claim 49, Wolfe teaches importing in-inventory product availability data from dealerships, and importing in-process product availability data from an enterprise database (column 7, lines 1-9; column 9, lines 41-47; column 12, lines 40-49).

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claims 2, 32, 33, 47, and 51 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Wolfe et al (US Patent 6,282,517 B1) in view of Tittel et al "XML for Dummies".

Referring to claims 2, 32, 33, 47, and 51, Wolfe teaches all of the limitations of claims 1, 31, and 45 as noted above. Wolfe does not teach that the search request and reply messages are in XML. However, Tittel teaches the benefits of incorporating XML into an HTML document (pages 27-42). Therefore it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art, at the time the invention was made, incorporate the teachings of Tittel into the system of Wolfe. One of ordinary skill in the art would have been motivated to do so in order to gain all of the advantages offered by XML as taught by Tittel.

Claims 4, 5-8, 11, 12, 16, 18-22, 25, 26, 30, 34-36, 39, 40, 44, 46, 48, and 50 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Wolfe et al (US Patent 6,282,517 B1).

Referring to claims 4 and 18, Wolfe teaches all the limitations of claims 3 and 17 as noted above. Wolfe does not explicitly teach that the criterion tag provides an enumeration of a plurality of attributes each specifying a vehicle configuration

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parameter, including make, model, year, a close criterion tag, a close criteria tag, and a request tag. However, Wolfe teaches that his system "...guides the user in entering the necessary data to create and submit either a new vehicle purchase request or a used vehicle purchase request." (column 10, lines 20-22). Therefore it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art, at the time the invention was made, to incorporate various configuration parameters into the system of Wolfe. One of ordinary skill in the art would have been motivated to do so in order to allow a user to create a purchase request for a specific vehicle.

Referring to claims 5 and 19, Wolfe teaches a weight attribute indicate of a search weighting of the criterion (column 4, lines 57-65; column 8, lines 6-21). Wolfe does not teach a requirement attribute indicative of whether the criterion is required. However, Official Notice is taken that it is well known in the art to require a user to enter a criterion in an online shopping environment. One of ordinary skill in the art would have been motivated to do so in order to ensure that a customer had a valid license, e-mail, address, or sufficient resources to complete a transaction.

Referring to claims 12, 26, and 40, Wolfe teaches the limitations of claims 9, 23, and 37 as noted above. Wolfe does not explicitly teach that the credit card authorization information comprises a credit card authorization number. However, Official Notice is taken that it is well known in the art for a consumer to provide a credit card number in an online shopping environment. One of ordinary skill in the art would have been motivated to do so in order to facilitate an electronic transaction.

Referring to claims 16, 30, and 44, Wolfe does not teach all the information enumerated by the applicant. However, please note that it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art, at the time the invention was made, to incorporate any information into the web page of Wolfe. One of ordinary skill in the art would have been motivated to do so in order to provide a customer with a complete description of a vehicle.

Referring to claims 6-8, 20-22, and 34-36, Wolfe teaches the system of claims 1, 17, and 31, wherein a vehicle parameter of the search reply message comprises: a vehicle status; a list of configured model parameters, including: a price, a make, a model, a dealer identifier, an engine specification, a transmission specification, an exterior paint color, a wheel specification, a seat fabric specification, an interior color, and an audio system specification (Figure 15; column 10, lines 15-29). Wolfe does not explicitly teach that the reply message comprises: a vehicle identifier, a tire specification, a drive specification, a cab specification, a body style specification, a real axle ratio specification, a pay load package specification, a wheel base specification, a roof color, a door specification, an accent color, a spare tire specification, a PEP specification, an option package specification, and a stand alone package specification. However, it would have obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art, at the time the invention was made, to incorporate all of this information into the system of Wolfe. One of ordinary skill in the art would have been motivated to do so in order to provide a customer with a complete description of the vehicle as well as all of the available

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options and the convenience of referencing the vehicle by a unique vehicle identifier when contacting the dealer.

Referring to claims 11, 25, and 39, Wolfe teaches the system of claims 9, 23, and 37 as noted above. Furthermore, Wolfe teaches a customer identifier, a customer name, a customer address, a customer email address; and a specification of a best way to contact the customer (Figure 7, item 722; column 11, lines 9-33). Wolfe does not explicitly teach a customer daytime telephone number, a customer evening telephone number, and a customer facsimile number. However, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art, at the time the invention was made, to incorporate this information into the system of Wolfe. One of ordinary skill in the art would have been motivated to do so in order to provide a car dealer with a plurality of ways of contacting a potential customer.

Referring to claims 46, 48, and 50, Wolfe teaches the limitations of claim 45 as noted above. Furthermore Wolfe teaches that the search reply message comprises compiling a list of products and respective configuration data (Figures 14, 15, and 16). Wolfe does not teach providing a percentage value for each product in the list indicative of the degree of match between the product and the configuration data contained in the search request message. However, Official Notice is taken that it is well known in the art to provide a search result with a percentage value for each product in a list indicative of the degree of match between the product and the data contained in a search request. Therefore it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art, at the time the invention was made, to incorporate a percentage value into the system of Wolfe. One

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of ordinary skill in the art would have been motivated to do so in order to allow a user to see which products closely matched his or her search request.

Claims 13, 14, 27, 28, 41, and 42 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Wolfe et al (US Patent 6,282,517 B1) in view of Korth et al "Database System Concepts".

Referring to claim 13, 27, and 41, Wolfe teaches the limitations of claim 9 as noted above. Furthermore, Wolfe teaches a stock number, a plurality of vehicle configuration parameters, a dealer identifier, an initial status indicative of whether the vehicle is new or used, and a search identifier specifying the selected vehicle configuration (Figures 5, 7, and 8; column 9, lines 49-60; column 11, lines 9-33, lines 43-57). Wolfe does not explicitly teach a vehicle identifier. However, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art, at the time the invention was made, to incorporate a vehicle identifier into the system of Wolfe. One of ordinary skill in the art would have been motivated to do so in order to provide a customer with the convenience of contacting the dealer directly and referencing the vehicle by a unique vehicle identifier. Wolfe also does not teach an item number or an order line number. However, Korth teaches a system for managing records in a database that includes a superkey for uniquely identifying an entity in an entity set (page 30-31). Therefore it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art, at the time the invention was made, to incorporate the teachings of Korth into the system of Wolfe. One of ordinary skill in the art would have been motivated to do so in order to uniquely identify an entity in entity set by its attributes.

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Referring to claims 14, 28, and 42, Wolfe and Korth do not explicitly teach that the vehicle configuration parameters comprises: a tire specification, a drive specification, a cab specification, a body style specification, a real axle ratio specification, a pay load package specification, a wheel base specification, a roof color, a door specification, an accent color, a spare tire specification, a PEP specification, an option package specification, and a stand alone package specification. However, it would have obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art, at the time the invention was made, to incorporate all of this information into the system of Wolfe and Korth. One of ordinary skill in the art would have been motivated to do so in order to provide a customer with a complete description of the vehicle as well as all of the available options and the convenience of referencing the vehicle by a unique vehicle identifier when contacting the dealer.

Claims 10, 24, and 38 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Wolfe et al (US Patent 6,282,517 B1) in view of St. Laurent "Cookies".

Wolfe teaches all the limitations of claims 9, 23, and 37 as noted above. Wolfe also teaches that the order information comprises: an order number, an order total price, an order date, an order time, a dealer identifier, and a payment method (Figures 7, items 702, 706, and 726; Figure 8, items 806 and 820; Figures 15 and 17). Wolfe does not teach a deposit amount. However, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art, at the time the invention was made, to include a deposit amount into the system of Wolfe. One of ordinary

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skill in the art would have been motivated to do so in order to allow a customer to reserve a vehicle. Wolfe also does not teach a source identifier associated with the web site from which the tag request originated, or a session identifier of the online session during which the tag request was submitted. However, St. Laurent teaches the use of cookies as a source and session identifier in an online environment (page 2). Therefore it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art, at the time the invention was made, to incorporate the teachings of St. Laurent into the system of Wolfe. One of ordinary skill in the art would have been motivated to do so in order to maintain state in an online environment, as taught by St. Laurent.

Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Naeem Haq whose telephone number is (703)-305-3930. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F 8:00am-5:00pm.

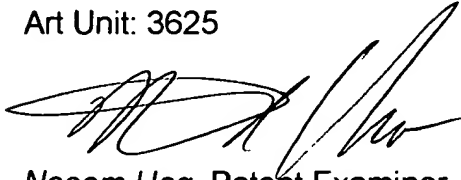
If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Wynn Coggins can be reached on (703)-308-1344. The fax phone numbers for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned are (703)-305-7687 for regular communications and (703)-305-7687 for After Final communications.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is (703)-308-1113.

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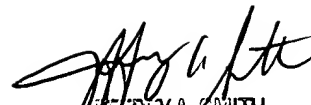
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Naeem Haq, Patent Examiner
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September 9, 2002



JEFFREY A. SMITH
PRIMARY EXAMINER